

FACTORS INFLUENCING TEACHING PROCESS AT ABDUL WALI KHAN UNIVERSITY MARDAN: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Revised June, 2014 ABSTRACT.

This paper represents the results of a descriptive study investigating the factors influencing teaching Process at Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan (Pakistan). The university is located in the province of KPK and is established in 2009. The major factors influencing teaching process are Professional Commitment, Working Environment, and Job Satisfaction. No Significant difference was found between natural and social science departments. While differences was found designation wise i.e., lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor and professors and also qualification wise. It can be concluded that designation and qualification matter in factors influencing teaching process.

Key Words: Professional Commitment, Education and Training, Working Environment and Remuneration, Job satisfaction.

1. Introduction. Teachers and parents have a major contribution in the academic and professional success of the students. They are responsible for their motivation to make lessons relevant to life. And the students will be able to determine a path in life. However, there are some factors that inhibit the teacher's ability to achieve these goals. Teachers play a very important role in the learning process of students who idealize teachers and try to copy them (Alam & Farid, 2012) . In all education system, the performance of teachers is responsible for school effectiveness and learning outcomes (Nadeem, Rana, Lone, Maqbool, Naz, & Ali, 2011). Teacher performance is the most crucial input in the field of education. Teacher is the integral part of any system of education. Teaching effectiveness depends on professional commitment, motivation, qualification, experience, training, aptitude, compensation, job satisfaction and conducive working environment.

In addition, lack of collegial support from staff at all levels has an inhibiting factor on teacher performance.

Teaching is a sacred profession and teachers are the builders of a nation. They have contribution in their students' intellectual, personal and social development by producing manpower.

The other external factors are lack of gender justice, gender disparities/threat, transport problem, political instability and undue political interference. This profession does not garner the status. Teacher's social status is low and held in low esteem. Teachers' status is lower than that of doctors, engineers, advocates, civil servants, even lower than that of a semiliterate and illiterate.

Teaching is a complex process with numerous variables affecting the quality of instruction and learning one of which being working environment of the teachers.

Nakpodia (2006) suggests that job security of workers in terms of income and employment will enhance stability of personnel and a long term commitment. Hard work and professional commitment are the key determinant for good

job performance cited by Akporehe, 2011. The quality of every educational system depends to a great extent on quality of teachers in terms of academics and professional qualification and experience as well as their level of competency in and dedication and their secondary function. Anderson and Dyke (1972) stated that, “the corner stone of good education in any school is its faculty (teachers); fine buildings and equipment, special services and all other factors which help to provide favorable environment for learning mean little if the learning experiences are directed by incompetent teachers”.

The responsibility of teachers is to assist and guide students to achieve higher standards of knowledge, ability, skills, and moral character. If teachers do their work well, then their work is of great value to others, not simply in a particular time, but also in the future⁴.

A profession is founded upon a systematic body of knowledge. This means that a profession is not merely concerned with the exercise of some skill, but a skill which has intellectual foundation. The intellectual foundation of teaching, include body of knowledge and systematic delineation of body knowledge, educational theory and pedagogy.

As noted above, a profession requires a lengthy period of academic and practical training. Training and certification are essential parts of a profession. Period long training is needed to develop specialists and technicians in any profession. There must be some specification of the nature of the training through state regulations. Teaching certainly fulfils this criterion, but the teacher's period of training is not as long as that required for doctors and lawyers.

By its very nature, teaching possesses two very appealing traits. First, it deals with the young, with those whose minds and characters are forming. It is a privilege to be entrusted with the task of facilitating the growth and development of the younger generation. The teacher shares the parents' responsibilities and joy of direct involvement in promoting the healthy and balanced mental and moral life of children. Indeed, teaching is pre-eminent among the callings in its opportunities for cultural and moral services. Second, teaching provides opportunities for intellectual development. It brings those who pursue it into intimate contact with books, experiments, and ideas. It stimulates the desire for increased knowledge and for wider intellectual contacts. Actually, no teacher can be really successful in performing his duties unless he is intellectually curious. Since literature, science, and the arts are taught in schools, the teacher's continued advancement in some or all of these fields is desirable. Thus, in teaching, intellectual development is not a sideline. It is something which fits directly into the demands of the work.

The material rewards that teaching brings are not the chief reasons for going into it. The remuneration of teaching is relatively modest but reasonably sure and steadily increasing. There is no doubt that teaching profession meets the more widely accepted criteria of a profession. It is however pertinent to note that there are subverting factors that restrains the advancement of teaching profession.

According to Younghusband, (2005) “A healthy work environment exists where individuals feel good, can use their talents to achieve high performance, feel valued, and have high levels of well-being”.

Pakistan is a developing country of South Asia like other developing countries on the main reasons for its underdevelopment is the low quality education which has in turn great impact on the country's social, economical and political system.”

The concept of career ‘implies both the notion of a commitment to a form of life-work or calling and the process whereby an individual progresses upwards through a hierarchy of professional roles. Upward mobility in the teaching profession often requires teacher to leave the classroom for an administrative role in the school or within the local authority, for College or University lecturing, for inspectorate, for a research post, or for any one of a number, of other possibility (Adegoke 1998). Unfortunately, the prospect for majority of the teachers to reach this peak is very limited since there are only few positions at a time. Majority thus retired without getting to the top.

2. Commitment to the Profession. Teaching has become employment of the last resort ‘among university graduates and secondary school leavers in many countries especially in developing countries like Pakistan. Consequently, teachers often lack a strong, long-term commitment to teaching as a vocation. Another problem that is militating against teaching as a profession is how committed are the teachers to the profession. There is no doubt that membership of the major professions implies a life commitment to the task. In the case of teaching, no such a life commitment to the task of teaching is apparent as in other professions. There are a number of factors that contribute to this state of affairs. One of these factors is the general notion of teaching as a —second Choice profession with many of the teachers only committing themselves to it at a late stage when they know that they cannot change their profession. Majority of the teachers at the initial stage of their teaching career did not expect to stay in teaching for more than a few years. They consider it as a stepping stone to other occupations and join the profession by chance. This invariably affects their commitment to the profession. Thus, in the absence of alternative

employment opportunities, becoming a school teacher is the main avenue for social and economic advancement for Pakistani graduates.

Salary

The salary level enjoyed by a professor is partly a measure of the esteem in which the profession is held in society. Although the economic status of the teacher has been steadily improving, teachers do not in general receive salaries comparable to those received within the major professions. As a result commitment to the growth of the profession is affected.

The Work Environment and Remuneration

Teachers rarely enjoy the same work environment as other professions. The size of the teaching force coupled with lower educational qualifications means that teachers are also paid considerably less than the mainstream professions.

The Professional culture in education

The members of a profession interact during their training, in their places of employment, within their professional associations and also informally. Through these interactions, a profession thus generates a distinctive culture embracing s fundamental values, the norms which govern the behavior of members and its symbols — including its history, folklore, special vocabulary, in sigma, and stereotypes. This culture is thus the source of professional solidarity, self-esteem, and self-consciousness. The professional culture, thus serve as a source of unity. The culture of the teaching profession has not been widely studied as to perform the enumerated functions above thus preventing common commitment to the teaching profession.

Objectives of the Study:

The objectives of the study were:

1. To compare natural and social science disciplines in terms of professional commitment, working environment, and job satisfaction for teaching process at Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan.
2. To compare the views of respondent in terms of designation regarding factors inhibiting teaching process at Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan.
3. To compare the views of respondent in terms of qualification regarding factors inhibiting teaching process at Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan.

Methodology

The study is descriptive and a case study of Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan. 150 teaching faculty of natural and social science departments comprised sample of the study. The respondents were asked to rate their response about professional commitment, working environment and job satisfaction as to what extent it inhibit teaching process. The scale was designed by researcher. It consists of 30 items.

Results:

Table 1. Comparison of natural and social science departments regarding factors inhibiting teaching process in Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan.

Factors	Respondents	N	Mean	Std	t	d.f	sig
Professional Commitment	Natural Science	75	23.02	8.08	-.369	148	.707
	Social Science	75	23.46	6.42			
Working Environment	Natural Science	75	15.61	4.45	-1.669	148	.134
	Social Science	75	16.89	4.91			
Job Satisfaction	Natural Science	75	57.5	10.1	1.08	148	.282
	Social Science	75	55.9	7.1			

Note: The result is significant if probability of occurrence (p-value) is equal to or less than 0.05 level

Table 2 shows the testing of significant difference between the opinions of teaching faculty of natural and social science discipline about the factors affecting teaching process Since $p = .707 > \alpha = 0.05$, $p = .134 > \alpha = 0.05$ and $p = .282 > \alpha = 0.05$ respectively for Professional Commitment, Working Environment and Job Satisfaction, means that null hypothesis of no significant difference between the opinions of teaching faculty of natural and social science discipline about the factors affecting teaching process is accepted. This means that discipline does not affect the

opinions of faculty of natural and social science discipline about the factors affecting teaching process in Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan.

Table 2. Comparison of natural and social science departments regarding factors influencing teaching process by designation.

Factor		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Professional commitment	Between Groups	130.697	20	6.879	23.046	.000
	Within Groups	38.803	130	.298		
	Total	169.500	150			
Working Environment	Between Groups	38.889	15	2.778	2.871	.001
	Within Groups	130.611	135	.967		
	Total	169.500	150			
Job satisfaction	Between Groups	55.551	15	3.703	4.355	.000
	Within Groups	113.949	135	.850		
	Total	169.500	150			

Note: The result is significant if probability of occurrence (p-value) is equal or less than 0.05

The table 2 shows that $F(20, 130) = 23.046$ since $p = 0.000 < \alpha = 0.05$, $F(15, 135) = 2.871$ since $p = 0.001 < \alpha = 0.05$, $F(15, 135) = 4.355$ since $p = 0.000 < \alpha = 0.05$ for Professional commitment, Working Environment and Job satisfaction respectively, reveals that null hypothesis of no significant difference among views of teaching faculty by their designation regarding the factors influencing teaching process in the university is rejected. This means that teaching faculty with their designation is of different opinion about the factors influencing teaching process in the university universities. There is significant difference between the views of Lecturer and other faculty members about three factors influencing teaching process in AWKUM.

Table 4. Comparison of natural and social science departments regarding factors inhibiting teaching process by Qualification.

Factor		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Professional commitment	Between Groups	36.060	15	2.404	9.902	.000
	Within Groups	32.533	135	.243		
	Total	68.593	150			
Working Environment	Between Groups	16.466	15	1.176	3.046	.000
	Within Groups	52.128	135	.386		
	Total	68.593	150			
Job satisfaction	Between Groups	46.501	20	2.447	14.402	.000
	Within Groups	22.092	130	.170		
	Total	68.593	150			

The table 2 shows that $F(15, 135) = 9.902$ since $p = 0.000 < \alpha = 0.05$, $F(15, 135) = 3.046$ since $p = 0.000 < \alpha = 0.05$, $F(20, 130) = 14.402$ since $p = 0.000 < \alpha = 0.05$ for Professional commitment, Working Environment and Job satisfaction respectively, reveals that null hypothesis of no significant difference among views of teaching faculty by their qualification regarding the factors influencing teaching process in the university is rejected. This means that teaching faculty with their qualification is of different opinion about the factors influencing teaching process in the university universities. There is significance difference between the views of Faculty members with MA/M.Sc qualification with Faculty members with M.Phil and Ph.D. The reasons may be again their job satisfaction and professional commitment.

Discussions: Teachers are the building blocks of universities. Undoubtedly, teachers are the developers of positive and progressive society in any country. It is therefore, necessary to have highly motivated teachers particularly in universities where teachers' motivation is extremely demanded. The courage and dedication for developing high performance work systems can only be achieved if teachers would be willing to give their best. When teachers in universities perform well, students are also high achievers and universities contribute more towards higher education (Rasheed & Aslam, 2010). From the findings of the it was concluded that working environment, professional commitment and job satisfaction are the factor that can enhance or reduce the teachers productivity and affect the students achievement. The findings are in line with Akporehe, (2011) the relationship between work environment and teachers' productivity.

According to Afe (1995) who asserted that for a teacher to carry out the conscious and deliberate efforts called teaching, he needs conducive environment cited by Borg, Riding, & Falzon, (1991), Englebrecht, Oswald, & Eloff, (2003) & Mimura & Griffiths, (2003) found that some of the key factors linking teachers' stress to their work environment have been noted as: inadequate administrative support, inadequate collegial support, lack of physical and professional resources, and students with disruptive behavior. Poor school ethos (environment) may be due, in part, to ineffective communication as well as poor working conditions which, in addition to heavy workload and large classes, may include lack of support and encouragement and lack of educational resources. These are the factors which can adversely affect the teacher's productivity and student's achievement.

The work environment is the totality of conditions under which a person or a group of persons works or performs his or her duties. Work environment can be in from of physical environment, human environment and relationship with colleagues and administrators, interaction within the system and the general aura of the work climate. Nakpodia (2006) stated that the success of any educational institute lies in the commitment of the teachers cited by Akporehe, 2011. But in Abdul Wali Khan University a lack of professional commitment was observed among teachers by their qualification and designation wise. The administration of the university is organizing workshops, seminars, symposium to enhance professional commitment and struggling hard to provide a conducive environment to their teaching faculty.

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